

Message Text

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ACTION MBFR-03

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L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14 USIA-12

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MBFR CAPITALS 234

USNMR SHAPE

USLOSACLANT

USCINCEUR

USDEL SALT TWO II

USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 VIENNA 2035

USNATO TAKE AS PRIORITY; GENEVA FOR DISTO

FROM US REP MBFR

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM

SUBJ: MBFR: AD HOC GROUP MEETING, 13 MARCH -- HIGHLIGHTS

1. MEETING CENTERED ON VARIOUS MEMBERS' REACTIONS TO EASTERN RESPONSE TO THE ALLIES 13 MARCH " HUNGARY IN ABEYANCE" PROPOSAL, (SEPTTEL). DISCUSSION WAS HIGHLIGHTED PRIMARILY BY DISAGREEMENTS OVER THE ISSUE OF THE PROS AND CONS OF ATTEMPTING TO GET SOME FORM OF INFORMAL MEETINGS GOING TO DISCUSS ISSUES OTHER THAN PARTICIPATION. IDEAS RANGED FROM OUTRIGHT OPPOSITION BY THE SOUTHERN FLANK REPS TO ANY NEW FORUM, TO THE NORWEGIAN REP' S PUSH FOR FORMAL PLENARIES, THE UK REP' S APPROACH FOR INFORMAL GROUP MEETINGS, AND AN FRG REP SUGGESTION TO HAVE AGENDA AND OTHER EXCHANGES VIA BILATERALS.

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2. AD HOC GROUP MEMBERS AGREED THAT TACTICAL OUTCOME OF CONTACT HAD BEEN USEFUL IN THAT A DIALOGUE WAS NOW ENGAGED, BUT DISAGREED ON THE SUBSTANCE OF THE SOVIET RESPONSE TO THE NEW EASTERN PROBE. CHAIRMAN (CONDE OF PORTUGAL), ITALIAN REP, AND TURKISH REP, ARGUED THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE AND THAT THE EASTERN SIDE HAD NOT GIVEN ANY REAL INDICATION THAT ITS POSITION WAS ALTERED. ON THE OTHER HAND, UK, FRG, AND DUTCH REPS FELT OTHER SIDE' S RESPONSE WITH SOME INDICATION THAT NEW EASTERN PROPOSALS MIGHT BE FORTHCOMING, SHOWED POSITIVE SIGNS AND WAS PROMISING. THEY FELT A GENUINE DIALOGUE HAD BEGUN AND THAT THIS DIALOGUE BESIDES DEALING WITH THE PARTICIPATION ISSUE MAY WELL OFFER A WAY TO PROCEED ON OTHER ISSUES THROUGH APPROACHES AT COFFEE MEETINGS, ETC, AS SUGGESTED IN UK PROPOSAL.

3. MOST REPS APPEARED TO AGREE THAT THE 13 MARCH MEETING OF THE TWO SIDES MADE IT MORE CLEAR THAT THE SOVIET GOAL WAS TO KEEP HUNGARY OUT OF DIRECT PARTICIPATION STATUS AND THAT PERSISTENT LINKAGE WITH ITALY WAS A TACTICAL MOVE DESIGNED TO ASSURE SPECIAL STATUS FOR HUNGARY.

4. US REP AND DUTCH REP (QUARLES) REPORTED AS ALLIED SPOKESMEN. THEY CONSIDERED THE MEETING DID NOT GO BADLY AND THAT THE OTHER SIDE REACTED IN A WAY THAT ENCOURAGED FURTHER PROBING. DUTCH REP EMPHASIZED THAT SOVIETS WERE INSISTING ON A SATISFACTORY SOLUTION TO THE HUNGARIAN ISSUE IN THESE TALKS AND DID NOT APPEAR WILLING TO LEAVE THE PARTICIPATION ISSUE IN ABEYANCE FOR LATER RESOLUTION. DUTCH REP ADDED THAT THE SOVIET INSISTENCE ON THE ELEMENT OF SECURITY AND NO UNILATERAL ADVANTAGE COULD BE USED BY THE WEST, POSITIVELY, TO ENHANCE THE CASE FOR A NON-CIRCUMVENTION AGREEMENT, IF THE ABEYANCE FORMULA FAILED AS HE FELT IT WOULD. HE FURTHER SUGGESTED THAT THE WEST SHOULD LEAVE IT TO THE OTHER SIDE TO SUGGEST A NON- CIRCUMVENTION APPROACH.

5. NORWEGIAN REP, (BOYESEN) OPENED WHAT PROVED TO BE THE MOST CONTENTIOUS ISSUE OF THE MEETING. HE SUGGESTED THE EASTERN RESPONSE TO THE WESTERN PROPOSAL SET THE SCENE FOR A SIMPLE AND STRAIGHT- FORWARD AGREEMENT TO AGREE TO DISAGREE. HE POSITED THE ARGUMENT THAT TIME WAS RUNNING OUT AND THAT THE WEST SHOULD PRESS THE SOVIETS HARD NOW TO DROP THEIR TACTICAL LINKAGE OF CONFIDENTIAL

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ITALY TO HUNGARY, TO ACCEPT THE FACT THAT THE PARTICIPATION

ISSUE WAS FOR NOW INSOLUABLE, AND TO MOVE ON TO THE SOLUABLE ISSUES IN AN ORDERLY FORUM. IN REPEATED FORCEFUL INTERVENTIONS, HE WARNED OF WESTERN GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC PRESSURES THAT MIGHT SOON PROVE EMBARRASSING IF MBFR PROGRESS WAS NOT MADE; OF THE POSSIBILITY THAT CSCE MIGHT MOVE INTO THE MILITARY AREA IF MBFR STAYED DEADLOCKED (SWEDISH ARMS REDUCTION PROPOSAL); AND THAT THERE WAS A CHANCE THE A MOMENTOUS OCCASION TO FURTHER DETENTE WOULD BE MISSED OVER TACTICAL DETAILS IF BOTH SIDES DID NOT RECOGNIZE THE GREATER NEED OF OPENING THE DISCOURSE, WHILE POSTPONING THE ISSUE THAT THAT DEADLOCKED THEM.

6. ITALIAN REP, (PETRIGOANI) LED THE REBUTTAL TO THE NORWEGIAN REP' S SUGGESTION AND OTHER SUGGESTIONS FOR UNSTRUCTURED MEETINGS. HE ASSERTED IN UNEQUIVOCAL TERMS THAT THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT WAS OPPOSED TO ANY NEW FORUM OR MECHANISM WHICH MIGHT BE USED TO GET THE TALKS MOVING BEFORE THE PARTICIPATION ISSUE WAS SETTLED, AND ITALY WAS CLEARLY ESTABLISHED AS A SPECIAL PARTICIPANT. HE WARNED THAT THE OTHER IDEAS BEING SUGGESTED FELL IN THE DIRECTION OF THE SOVIET 19 EQUAL PARTICIPANTS APPROACH AND WERE TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE. HE INSISTED THAT HE WOULD OPPOSE ANY SUCH SUGGESTIONS AND FORCE A DECISION ON ANY SUCH PROPOSAL BACK TO THE COUNCIL. HIS MAIN DEBATING POINT TO THE NORWEGIAN REP WAS THAT ALTHOUGH THE WEST WAS WILLING TO AGREE TO DISAGREE OVER JUST HUNGARY, THE SOVIETS WERE NEITHER WILLING TO LIMIT THE ISSUE TO HUNGARY OR TO AGREE TO DISAGREE. HE SAID HE WAS PESSIMISTIC ABOUT THE CURRENT APPROACH AND CONVINCED THAT THE SOVIETS WERE DETERMINED TO KEEP HUNGARY IN FLANK STATUS WHERE HUNGARY COULD BE USED LATER TO PAIR OFF AGAINST FRENCH OR EVEN UK INCLUSION THUS EVEN RAISING THE ISSUE OF FBS.

7. ITALIAN REP WAS SUPPORTED BY GREEK AND TURKISH REPS. GREEK REP SUGGESTED THAT SUCH TALK WAS UNTIMELY AND THAT MAIN POINT NOW WAS TO CARRY CURRENT PROBE OUT TO ITS CONCLUSION. HE ADVOCATED AGREEMENT THAT EAST SHOULD BE TOLD THAT HUNGARY' S STATUS UNDER NEW WESTERN PROPOSAL WOULD BE EQUAL TO RIGHTS OF FLANK STATES BUT WITH POSSIBILITY TO GAIN THE RIGHTS OF A FULL PARTICIPANT IF DESIRED AT A LATER DATE. HE SUGGESTED THIS LINE BE ADVANCED BY THE WESTERN SPOKESMAN AT THE NEXT MEETING WITH THE EAST. US REP SUGGESTED THAT IT WAS PREFERABLE TO PRESENT HUNGARY' S ABEYANCE STATUS IN MOST ATTRACTIVE LIGHT

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RATHER THAN A LESSER STATUS. HE SUGGESTED THAT HUNGARY' S STATUS UNDER THE WESTERN PROPOSAL SHOULD BE TO HAVE ALL THE RIGHTS OF A DIRECT PARTICIPANT THAT HUNGARY WAS WILLING TO TAKE.

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USMISSION GENEVA

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FROM US REP MBFR

8. FRG REP (RUTH) COMMENTED THAT A SIGNIFICANT POINT IN THE SPOKESMEN REPORT WAS THE HUNGARIAN IDEA THAT A NEUTRAL FORMULA COULD BE FOUND PERMITTING LATER DECISION THAT FLANK STATES, WITHOUT NAMING THEM, COULD BECOME DIRECT PARTICIPANTS. THIS CONCEPT SHOULD BE INVESTIGATED FURTHER. FRG STATEMENT WAS OPPOSED BY ITALIAN, TURKISH, GREEK AND UK REPS WHO SAID CONCEPT WAS UNACCEPTABLE SINCE IT MIGHT OPEN DOOR TO PRESSURES TO INVITE ALLIED FLANKS OR OTHER OUTSIDE STATES. FRG REP ALSO SUGGESTED THAT THIS NEW DIALOGUE MIGHT CREATE A GOOD ATMOSPHERE FOR BILATERAL EXCHANGES (NOT DECISIONS) ON OTHER QUESTIONS LIKE THE AGENDA.

9. UK REP (THOMPSON) INTERPRETED SOVIET REACTION TO LATEST PROPOSAL AS BASICALLY A POSITIVE SIGN. HE WAS PLEASED BY FACT
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THEY ACCEPTED CONCEPT OF A NEUTRAL PROPOSAL AND SUGGESTED WESTERN SPOKESMEN MUST CONVINCE THEM THAT HUNGARY' S BEING A SPECIAL PARTICIPANT WAS NOT NEUTRAL. HE WAS FIRST TO POINT OUT THAT SOVIET FREQUENT REFERENCE TO 11 AGREED DIRECT PARTICIPANTS WAS A SIGNIFICANT POINT AND INDICATED THEY WERE EAGER TO POCKET BENELUX STATUS AS DIRECT PARTICIPANTS.

10. MEETING CLOSED WITH AGREEMENT THAT QUESTION OF OTHER FORUMS WAS NOT ONE THAT COULD OR SHOULD BE SOLVED AT THIS MEETING BUT PERHAPS MUST BE FACED SOON IF CURRENT PROBE CONTINUES FOR VERY LONG. WESTERN SPOKESMEN AT NEXT MEETING WITH EAST ON 14 MARCH WERE TO CONTINUE PROBE UNDER PREVIOUS TALKING POINTS, TO FURTHER EXPLAIN HUNGARY' S PROPOSED ABEYANCE STATUS, TO AVOID ANY INDICATION THAT WEST FEELS A TIME CONSTRAINT, TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT SPECIAL STATUS FOR HUNGARY WAS NOT NEUTRAL, AND TO RESPOND TO EASTERN QUESTIONS/ PROPOSALS USING THEIR BEST DISCRETION. SUGGESTION WAS MADE BUT NOT FURTHER PURSUED THAT THE FRG REP JOIN THE ALLIED SIDE AT THE 14 MARCH MEETING. HUMES

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